

Message Text

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USIA-06 OMB-01 /061 W

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5971

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 01393

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, GW

SUBJECT: THE STATE OF PLAY OF THE POLISH AGREEMENTS
DEBATE

SUMMARY: IT IS STILL IMPOSSIBLE TO PREDICT WITH CONFIDENCE HOW THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT WILL FARE IN THE BUNDES RAT OR WHAT THE POLITICAL FALLOUT WOULD BE FROM A CDU/CSU VETO IN THE BUNDES RAT. THE GOVERNMENT CONTINUES TO EXPRESS PUBLICLY CONFIDENCE THAT THE AGREEMENT WILL PASS AND OPPONENTS IN THE UNION PARTIES REAFFIRM THEIR INTENTION TO VOTE AGAINST THE AGREEMENT. A RECENT INFAS POLL INDICATED 46 PERCENT SEE THE POLISH AGREEMENTS AS A GOOD BASIS FOR FUTURE GERMAN-POLISH RELATIONS; 39 PERCENT DO NOT AND 15 PERCENT HAVE NO
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OPINION. SUPPORT FOR "OSTPOLITIK" IN GENERAL AS MEASURED

BY POLLS HAS DECLINED IN SUPPORT FROM 1972 WHEN 59 PERCENT SUPPORTED THE EASTERN TREATIES AS COMPARED TO 24 PERCENT WHO DID NOT. THE MOST RECENT INFAS POLL SHOWED 42 PERCENT IN FAVOR; 33 PERCENT NOT IN FAVOR, AND 25 PERCENT WITH NO OPINION. SPD/FDP POLITICIANS SEEM TO THINK THAT A BUNDESRAT VETO WOULD REBOUND IN FAVOR OF THE SOCIAL/LIBERAL COALITION GOVERNMENT. CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR-CANDIDATE KOHL IS MORE GUARDED IN HIS ASSESSMENT OF THE POSSIBLE FALLOUT RESULTING FROM A CDU/CSU VETO. END OF SUMMARY.

1. WITH THE SURPRISING ELECTION OF A CDU MINISTER-PRESIDENT IN LOWER SAXONY, THE QUESTION OF HOW THE BUNDESRAT WILL VOTE ON THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT IN MARCH IS MORE CONFUSED THAN EVER. UP UNTIL THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN HANNOVER, ALL ATTENTION WAS RIVETED ON THE SAARLAND WHERE A STALEMATE BETWEEN THE CDU AND SPD/FDP LEFT THE QUESTION OF THE SAARLAND'S VOTE IN THE BUNDESRAT OPEN. NOW IT IS UNCLEAR HOW A CDU MINORITY GOVERNMENT (IF THAT IS THE OUTCOME IN HANNOVER) WOULD VOTE ON THE AGREEMENT IN THE BUNDESRAT.

2. ASIDE FROM THE TACTICAL CONSIDERATIONS AS TO HOW THE SAARLAND OR LOWER SAXONY WILL VOTE, THE ISSUE OF WHAT THE POLITICAL IMPLICATIONS OF A BUNDESRAT VETO WOULD BE, ALSO LOOMS ON THE HORIZON. MOST GERMAN POLITICIANS, AT LEAST IN PRIVATE CONVERSATIONS, ARE CAUTIOUS ABOUT PREDICTING THE EFFECT OF A BUNDESRAT VETO ON THE FEDERAL ELECTIONS.

3. GRAF LAMBSDORFF, THE FDP BUNDESTAG DEPUTY, IS CONVINCED THAT A BUNDESRAT VETO WOULD REBOUND TO THE COALITION GOVERNMENT'S FAVOR. HE BELIEVES THAT THERE WOULD BE WORLD-WIDE NEGATIVE REACTION TO THE VETO AND THAT IT MIGHT EVEN BECOME AN ISSUE IN THE U.S. PRESIDENTIAL CONTEST. CDU/CSU CHANCELLOR-CANDIDATE KOHL WAS MORE GUARDED IN HIS RECENT CONVERSATION WITH EMBASSY OFFICERS. HE ADMITTED FREELY THAT NO ONE CAN BE SURE WHAT THE POLITICAL FALLOUT WOULD BE IN THE CASE OF A CDU/CSU VETO. IT IS APPARENT THAT AT LEAST SOME OF THE

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STRATEGISTS IN THE SPD FEEL A BUNDESRAT VETO WOULD BE A PLUS FOR THE GOVERNMENT AND ENABLE THE SOCIAL DEMOCRATS TO REPEAT THE 1972 CAMPAIGN PERFORMANCE WHICH GAVE THE SPD ITS GREATEST ELECTION SUCCESS IN THE POST-WAR PERIOD.

4. WE HAVE RECEIVED, ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS, THE RESULTS OF A RECENT INFAS POLL. WHEN ASKED IF THEY BELIEVED THE POLISH AGREEMENTS WERE A GOOD OR A BAD

BASIS FOR FUTURE GERMAN-POLISH RELATIONS, 46 PERCENT REPLIED YES, 39 PERCENT REPLIED NO AND 15 PERCENT HAD NO OPINION. WHEN THESE FIGURES ARE COMPARED WITH A POLL MADE IN 1972 CONCERNING THE EASTERN TREATIES (AT THAT TIME 59 PERCENT SUPPORTED THE TREATIES, 24 PERCENT DID NOT, AND 17 PERCENT HAD NO OPINION), IT IS CLEAR THAT THERE IS LESS ENTHUSIASM FOR THE POLISH AGREEMENTS THAN THERE WAS FOR THE EASTERN TREATIES FOUR YEARS AGO. THE MOST RECENT INFAS POLL ABOUT ATTITUDES TOWARDS

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 01393

"OSTPOLITIK" SHOWED 42 PERCENT IN FAVOR OF "OSTPOLITIK",
33 PERCENT AGAINST AND 25 PERCENT NO OPINION. NEVER-

THELESS, THE SUPPORT FOR THE POLISH AGREEMENTS IN THE INFAS POLL IS GREATER THAN THE "WICKHERT" POLL OF LAST NOVEMBER (66 PERCENT AGAINST AGREEMENT).

5. INFAS IS KNOWN FOR ITS CLOSE TIES WITH THE SPD, AND OUR SOURCE TOLD US THAT HE BELIEVED A CLEVER SPD CAMPAIGN AGAINST A BUNDESRAT VETO WOULD INCREASE SUPPORT FOR THE COALITION GOVERNMENT.

6. A POLISH DIPLOMAT TOLD AN EMBOFF THAT THE AGREEMENTS ARE A DOMESTIC POLITICAL PLUS FOR THE SPD AND FDP
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REGARDLESS OF THE OUTCOME OF THE BUNDESRAT DEBATE. HOWEVER, ON BALANCE HE BELIEVES THAT SCHMIDT AND GENSCHER HAVE SO MUCH PRESTIGE INVESTED IN THE AGREEMENTS THAT THEY PREFER THAT THE AGREEMENTS PASS SO THAT THEY CAN CAMPAIGN ON THE BASIS THAT THEY REPRESENT A FOREIGN POLICY TRIUMPH (TO WHICH THE OPPOSITION HAS ACQUIESCED).

7. OVER THE WEEKEND, THE GOVERNMENT'S SPOKESMAN AS WELL AS FOREIGN MINISTER GENSCHER EXPRESSED CONFIDENCE THAT THE POLISH PENSION AGREEMENT WILL PASS THE BUNDESRAT. DURING THE WEEKEND BOTH COALITION PARTIES ALSO EXPRESSED THEIR THANKS TO THE HIGHEST COUNCIL OF THE PROTESTANT CHURCH IN THE FRG FOR ITS SUPPORT OF THE AGREEMENTS. HOWEVER, CDU BUNDESTAG DEPUTY AND ELECTION STRATEGY MEMBER DREGGER REAFFIRMED THE UNION PARTY'S INTENTION TO OPPOSE THE PENSION AGREEMENT IN THE BUNDESRAT.
HILLENBRAND

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